

Brazil's development cooperation: a new paradigm?

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Context - Brazilian development cooperation since 2003

Brazil as a 'rising power'

External cooperation with Africa initiated by President Lula (2002-2010) as a long-term commitment, “**part of the effort to cement the country’s universalist vocation and retrieve the national identity in the formation of foreign policy**” (ABC)

-Discourse built on shared history with Africa (Community of Portuguese Language Countries - CPLP) arising from a Portuguese colonial common heritage and a wider shared identity of belonging to ‘Global South’, in a **clear dichotomous opposition** to USA/’Global North’ (Solidarity in foreign policy in Worker’s Party manifesto dates back to 80s)


-Growing cooperation between Brazil and Africa, ranging from social and agricultural technical assistance to broader commitments in terms of trade and commercial agreements (e.g. Brazil’s commerce with Africa grew five-fold between 2002-2009)

Brazil's discourse?

Brazilian rhetoric can be seen in two broad lines:
‘diplomacy of solidarity’ and (according to ABC) a **‘retrieval of the national identity in the formation of foreign policy’**

The diplomacy of solidarity is underpinned, at the technical level, by a commitment to human and social development (particularly evident at the field level)

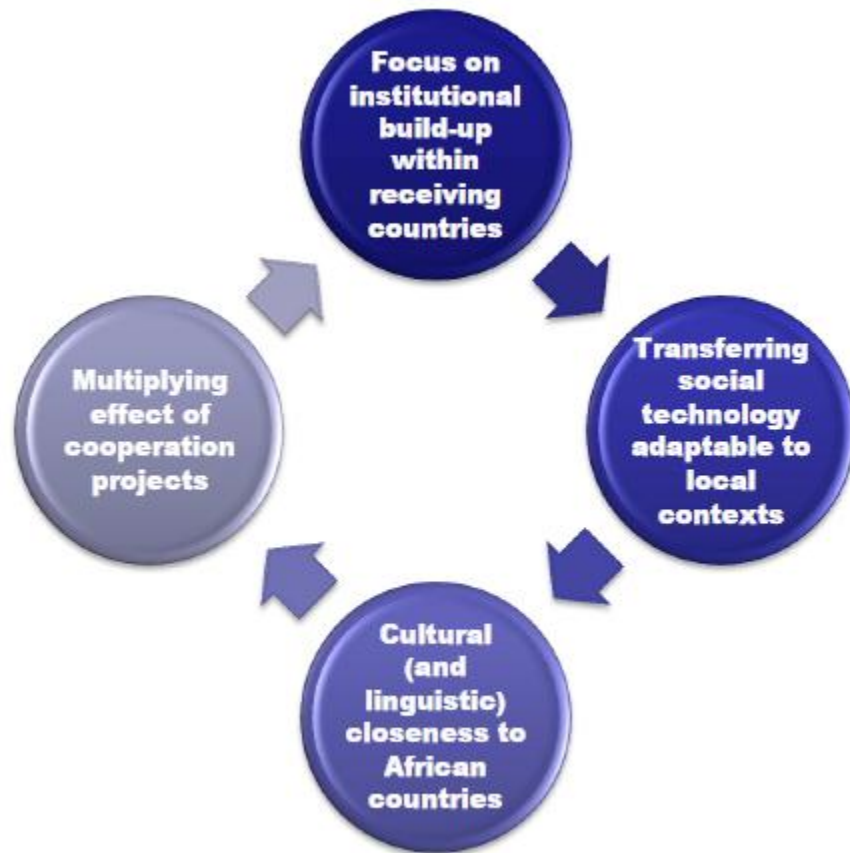
Development cooperation firmly embedded in foreign policy: tool to promote economic and political interests directly/indirectly (ABC, 2010)

Director of ABC (2011): “We are something else. Foreign policy is about politics but we are something else – we are creating bridges between people, institutions, cultures, societies...” 

What Brazil can suggest a new paradigm is through showing how it achieved dev. gains in national context (Soares, IPC IG)

Drivers for International Coop. & Evidence Base (Soc Tech)

Drivers for international cooperation and the 'export' of Social Policies (MDS)



**Social Technology Transfer
– evidence base?**

**Learning from Brazil's
successful social policy
programming:**

**Prolific research + M&E of
Social Policy programming in
Brazil – This does not
currently translate to most of
Brazil's dev. coop.**

Aid vs. Development Effectiveness

Brazil does not give aid (constitutional and ideological position) – but rather, uses technical cooperation and builds on heritage of NAM, G77 etc.: **partnerships** (\$480 million, \$30 mio from ABC – published 2010 so there is some willingness to publish this data)

Focus (currently rhetorical) is on development effectiveness.
Rejection of Paris, OECD-DAC, donor-coordination forums etc.

This is not necessarily negative, but Brazilian technical cooperation does not meet criteria for dev. effectiveness

Honeymoon period: Brazil is currently seen as a preferred partner by developing countries, particularly in Africa (case-studies: Mozambique and Ghana). This means there is little incentive (abroad) to engage in IATI, donor harmonization etc., and none at home (minimal press coverage / interest; low public awareness)  e.g. press coverage via Folha de SP

‘Shared problems, shared objectives’

The ‘imaginary’ of this partnership, based on ‘shared problems, shared objectives’ (Govt of Ghana official) is stronger than the reality of the oft-ineffective/inefficient technical cooperation missions on the ground: parallel narratives which are contradictory, and yet all somehow simultaneously valid

Alternatively, instruments like TDC may serve to bridge the relation between N and S, and help mediate the N/S ‘value conflict’ in a way which preserves the innovative approach Brazil brings to dev. coop. partnerships (built on important achievements in terms of reducing poverty and inequality at the national level) and allows it to learn from ‘N’ experience – i.e. WB partnership

This in turn may lead to coordination and division of labour and result in greater complementarity – room for manoeuvre for Brazil to influence with their own ‘model’?

Prospects for 'aid' coordination, effectiveness, transparency, more comprehensive reporting?

There is currently little incentive to engage in IATI, OECD-DAC and similar 'N' dev aid architecture (harmonization, alignment, transaction costs, predictability and mutual accountability). Lack of capacity and political will – extremely fragmented delivery of cooperation. HOWEVER, Brazil may find maintaining its 'brand' as it stand is unsustainable and so engage in partnerships which force it to start complying with this agenda (i.e. with WB)

Honeymoon period cannot last – in the short term the Brazilian 'brand' may be strong enough to make up for its somewhat haphazard approach to dev. coop. It may be Brazil will learn from its domestic social development programmes and engage in systematic M&E as a way of improving their performance and delivery and developing a coherent programme

OR Brazil will simply desist from its 'autonomous' dev. coop. and join the status quo through partnerships, or simply continue with technical assistance missions but ensure they are of higher quality

South-South Win-Win?

Case-studies of TDC in Mozambique and Ghana seem to show limited results either from ‘one size fits all’ social technology transfer for dev. coop. – no suggestion of a ‘new paradigm’ as yet

Despite lack of impact, dev. coop. missions are generally popular and diplomatic relations continue to flourish, notwithstanding President Dilma’s cooler stance towards dev. cooperation Africa (compared to Lula) and the problematic lack of awareness of local contexts (Moz – MEC – top-down approach in past poorly received)

Brazilian discourse frames the (re)new(ed) relationship with Africa in a different light to traditional cooperation, distancing itself both from the ‘Northern’/Anglophone ‘neo-colonialist’ vision and from the Chinese model (Farani 2011) – but how different is what it is actually delivering from traditional modes of cooperation? Is this a case of the ‘emperor’s new clothes’?

Farani: **“We are brand new in the market – people want to try us”**

What next?

- Brazil claims to promote ‘technical cooperation which seeks to sow capacity for autonomous development’ (ABC 2010) – but how far has it got with thinking through how to identify and adapt to local African (or Asian etc.) contexts? Limited evidence of systematic adaptation of Brazilian policies to ensure ‘best fit’ for local context (social and institutional realities)
- Once ‘honeymoon period’ is over Brazil will have to engage with some of these issues in order to avoid tarnishing its reputation – this may well include a move towards greater coordination, transparency and effectiveness, although this seems unlikely to be in the DAC framework
- Public perceptions: dev. coop. doesn’t raise many questions at home – when it does this may signify a move towards mutual accountability being demanded and taking place between peoples in ‘donor’ and ‘recipient’ countries (Glennie, Barder)

Thank you!

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